

Claims

1. Apparatus for use in a vehicle for communications through a communications network comprising:
  - 5 an interface for receiving from the communication network at least one message having an address, the address including an identifier identifying the vehicle, the message being received from the communications network based on the address; and
  - 10 a processor for providing an indicator indicating a receipt of the message.
2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the communications network includes at least part of an Internet.
- 15 3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the identifier includes at least part of a vehicle identification number (VIN).
4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the message includes a recall notice concerning the vehicle.
- 20 5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the message includes a code for disabling the vehicle.
6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the indicator is selectable to open the message for viewing thereof.
- 25 7. Apparatus for serving at least one vehicle comprising:
  - an interface for receiving through a communications network at least one message from the vehicle, the message including an origination address and selected data concerning the vehicle, the origination address
  - 30 comprising an identifier identifying the vehicle; and

a processor for providing the selected data and the identifier in the message.

8. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the message has a destination address associated therewith, the  
5 destination address being associated with the apparatus.

9. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the selected data concerns a location of the vehicle.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the selected data is formatted in accordance with a global positioning  
10 system (GPS) technique.

11. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the selected data is provide by at least one sensor in the vehicle.

12. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the selected data concerns an odometer reading of the vehicle.

15 13. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the selected data concerns a speed of the vehicle.

14. The apparatus of claim 7 wherein the selected data concerns a direction of the vehicle.

20 15. Apparatus in a vehicle for communications through a communications network comprising:

a transmitter for transmitting a first message through the communications network, the first message including an identifier identifying the vehicle and information concerning a location of the vehicle; and  
25 a receiver for receiving a second message responsive to the first message, the second message being addressed to the vehicle based on the identifier, the second message including data which is a function of the location of the vehicle.

16. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the data concerns at least one entity within a selected distance from the location of the vehicle.

17. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the data  
5 concerns an advertisement of the at least one entity.

18. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the data concerns directions to the at least one entity.

19. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the data includes customer information provided by the at least  
10 one entity.

20. The apparatus of claim 16 wherein the data concerns a digital image of the at least one entity.

21. The apparatus of claim 15 wherein the data concerns a map.

15 22. Apparatus for serving at least one vehicle through a communications network, the vehicle including therein a display and a device for identifying a location of the vehicle, the apparatus comprising:

20 a memory for storing first data concerning a plurality of entities and second data concerning locations thereof, the entities being divided into groups, the first and second data being stored according to grouping of the entities;

25 an interface for receiving from the vehicle, through the communications network, at least one request which includes an identity of a selected group of the entities, and information concerning the location of the vehicle identified by the device in the vehicle;

30 a processor responsive to the request for identifying a set of entities within the selected group, each entity in the set being identified based on the

location of the entity derived from the second data and the location of the vehicle derived from the information; and

5 a transmitter for providing, on the display in the vehicle, identifiers indicative of the location of each entity in the set and the location of the vehicle.

23. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the entities are divided based on a geographic distribution of the entities.

10 24. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the entities are divided based on functions of the entities.

25. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein one of the groups of the entities comprises selected entities for personal purposes.

15 26. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein one of the groups of the entities comprises selected entities for business purposes.

20 27. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the information is formatted in accordance with a GPS technique.

28. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein the first data includes advertising data.

25 29. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein one of the identifiers indicative of a location of a selected entity incorporates a logo representative of the selected entity.

30 30. The apparatus of claim 22 wherein one of the identifiers indicative of a location of a selected entity is selectable to view customer information provided by

the selected entity.

31. A method for use in an apparatus in a vehicle for communications through a communications network comprising:

- 5 receiving from the communications network at least one message having an address, the address including an identifier identifying the vehicle, the message being received from the communications network based on the address; and
- 10 a processor for providing an indicator indicating a receipt of the message.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the communications network includes at least part of an Internet.

- 15 33. The method of claim 31 wherein the identifier includes at least part of a VIN.

34. The method of claim 31 wherein the message includes a recall notice concerning the vehicle.

- 20 35. The method of claim 31 wherein the message includes a code for disabling the vehicle.

36. The method of claim 31 wherein the indicator is selectable to open the message for viewing thereof.

37. A method for use in an apparatus for serving at least one vehicle comprising:

- 25 receiving through a communications network at least one message from the vehicle, the message including an origination address and selected data concerning the vehicle, the origination address comprising an identifier identifying the vehicle; and
- 30 providing the selected data and the identifier in

the message.

38. The method of claim 37 wherein the message has a destination address associated therewith, the destination address being associated with the apparatus.

5        39. The method of claim 37 wherein the selected data concerns a location of the vehicle.

40. The method of claim 39 wherein the selected data is formatted in accordance with a GPS technique.

41. The method of claim 37 wherein the selected  
10 data is provide by at least one sensor in the vehicle.

42. The method of claim 37 wherein the selected data concerns an odometer reading of the vehicle.

43. The method of claim 37 wherein the selected data concerns a speed of the vehicle.

15        44. The method of claim 37 wherein the selected data concerns a direction of the vehicle.

45. A method for use in an apparatus in a vehicle for communications through a communications network comprising:

20        transmitting a first message through the communications network, the first message including an identifier identifying the vehicle and information concerning a location of the vehicle; and

25        receiving a second message responsive to the first message, the second message being addressed to the vehicle based on the identifier, the second message including data which is a function of the location of the vehicle.

46. The method of claim 45 wherein the data concerns at least one entity within a selected distance from the location of the vehicle.

47. The method of claim 46 wherein the data  
5 concerns an advertisement of the at least one entity.

48. The method of claim 46 wherein the data concerns directions to the at least one entity.

49. The method of claim 46 wherein the data includes customer information provided by the at least  
10 one entity.

50. The method of claim 46 wherein the data concerns a digital image of the at least one entity.

51. The method of claim 45 wherein the data concerns a map.

15 52. A method for use in an apparatus for serving at least one vehicle through a communication network, the vehicle including therein a display and a device for identifying a location of the vehicle, the method comprising:

20 storing first data concerning a plurality of entities and second data concerning locations thereof, the entities being divided into groups, the first and second data being stored according to grouping of the entities;

25 receiving from the vehicle, through the communication network, at least one request which includes an identity of a selected group of the entities, and information concerning the location of the vehicle identified by the device in the vehicle;

30 in response to the request, identifying a set of entities within the selected group, each entity in the

set being identified based on the location of the entity derived from the second data and the location of the vehicle derived from the information; and

5 providing, on the display in the vehicle, identifiers indicative of the location of each entity in the set and the location of the vehicle.

53. The method of claim 52 wherein the entities are divided based on a geographic distribution of the entities.

10 54. The method of claim 52 wherein the entities are divided based on functions of the entities.

55. The method of claim 52 wherein one of the groups of the entities comprises selected entities for personal purposes.

15 56. The method of claim 52 wherein one of the groups of the entities comprises selected entities for business purposes.

20 57. The method of claim 52 wherein the information is formatted in accordance with a GPS technique.

58. The method of claim 52 wherein the first data includes advertising data.

25 59. The method of claim 52 wherein one of the identifiers indicative of a location of a selected entity incorporates a logo representative of the selected entity.

30 60. The method of claim 52 wherein one of the identifiers indicative of a location of a selected entity is selectable to view customer information provided by the selected entity.